



NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER **UPDATE**

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From the Commanding Officer's Desk

By Capt. Scott R. Jonson, Commanding Officer, NMCPHC

Greetings to all of our internal and external stakeholders! It has been another exciting quarter in and around the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Enterprise. Please allow me to share a few highlights with you.

At our headquarters element, our four dedicated science directorates have received numerous requests for information and/or support. Our tireless Environmental Health Directorate has been fully employed in responding to higher authority requests for public health support at several neighboring and remote locations, while our Preventive Medicine Directorate has endeavored to standardize and optimize our four Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Units, four Forward Deployable Preventive Medicine



Units, and two Comprehensive Industrial Hygiene Labs. Our Population Health Directorate has been highly interactive and productive with their leading-edge work in the areas of health analytics, epidemiologic services, and health promotion and wellness programs. Finally, our Laboratory Services Directorate has led the way in implementing new technologies and expanding drug screening capabilities in an effort to deter illegal drug use and, in doing so, enhance Force Health Protection. *(cont. on page 2)*

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In direct support of our science mission, our outstanding Finance and Administration Directorates and superb Special Assistants have continued to embrace continuous process improvement to ensure we meet and exceed our mission requirements. Additionally, our Strategic Planning Board has developed a comprehensive plan to address priority goals, objectives, and initiatives to take our enterprise to the next level.

Our ten diverse, dispersed, and dynamic outlying activities have supported numerous initiatives and missions with global public health implications across Europe, Africa, Asia, and throughout the Pacific and Caribbean regions. I expect this level of engagement to not only continue, but to grow as we lean forward into our challenging future. The Commanding Officers, Officers-in-Charge, and Senior Enlisted Leaders in our exceptional outlying activities fully understand the importance of enhancing Force readiness and optimal health, while creating meaningful partnerships that align with the goals and objectives of Navy Medicine and higher authority. Thank you for the critical and specialized work you do each and every day!

While we continue to operate at an elevated op-tempo, we are also preparing for considerable

change in the coming months. Our first of five changes of command/charge will be at the Navy Drug Screening Lab (NDSL) in Jacksonville, Florida on 31 May 2016. Three changes of charge will follow at Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit (NEPMU) SEVEN (08 July 2016), the Naval Dosimetry Center (29 July 2016), and NEPMU TWO (11 August). Finally, I will “pass the torch” to CAPT Todd Wagner, MC, USN on 19 August 2016. We will also be saying “Fair Winds and Following Seas” to a number of our military and civilian shipmates who will be transferring or retiring after numerous years of faithful and honorable service to our command and the nation. Additionally, we will continue to align with Navy Medicine East and prepare for our upcoming Medical Inspector General Inspection, which is anticipated in the December 2016 timeframe.

As I enter my final quarter as the Commanding Officer of our great enterprise, I want to thank our many valued internal and external stakeholders for working together collaboratively on behalf of our selfless warfighters who deserve the best we can offer in the way of world-class Force Health Protection. Bravo Zulu for a job extremely well done! It has been an honor and privilege to work with you!

EDC Celebrates Ten Years of Impact on Military Public Health

By Angela Schlein and Genevieve Williams, NMCPHC

The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center's (NMCPHC) EpiData Center (EDC) celebrated its tenth anniversary, 4 May 2016.

Founded in May 2006, the EDC provides health surveillance to the Department of the Navy (DoN) and reach-back support to the Department of Defense (DoD), making it possible for military health care providers and professionals to assess medical readiness in support of Force Health Protection and identify, treat, and prevent disease.



Dr. Chris Rennix (far right) poses with the first staff members of the EDC in 2006. (Photo by NMCPHC Public Affairs)

Over the past 10 years, the EDC has grown significantly, expanding its team of epidemiologists, information technology (IT) specialists, and program analysts from five staff in 2006 to more than 40 in 2016. To address the variety of epidemiological needs across the DoD, the center established five divisions:

The **Communicable Disease** division is primarily responsible for monitoring medical events reportable to military, local, and federal governing agencies. The division closely tracks influenza and sexually transmitted infection rates, as well as other emerging infections related to Force Health Protection, such as the Zika virus.

The **Clinical Epidemiology** division focuses its surveillance efforts on healthcare-related infections, antimicrobial consumption, and patient safety issues in the healthcare setting, including the close monitoring of multi-drug resistant organisms (MDROs).

The **Deployment Health** division surveys conditions unique to deployed active duty service members, including concerns that are self-reported on members' Deployment Health Assessments (DHAs). Analyses frequently focus on traumatic brain injury (TBI), mental health diagnoses, and military suicide among operational forces and commands.

The **Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology** division performs thorough studies to assess any environmental and occupational factors that are possibly related to an increased risk of disease. The division tracks occupational safety metrics, including the surveillance of injuries such as spine damage and hearing loss, and conducts cancer investigations.

The **Information Technology** division is the EDC's largest division. The team safeguards and manages the EDC's extensive data resources, including the 700,000 to 15 million records that arrive at the center daily. The division also provides software development and help desk services for several DoD-wide applications, including the Disease Reporting System internet (DRSi), Electronic Deployment Health Assessment (eDHA) system, and the Health Promotion and Wellness Dashboard (HPWD).

What is Epidemiology and the EDC?

Epidemiology is the study of patterns, causes, and outcomes of health conditions in specified populations. The EDC was founded to address DoN-specific public health concerns through health surveillance. The EDC collects data, including personnel and military health system data, from a variety of available administrative sources, analyzes that data, and uses the findings to address public health concerns within the DoN. Ultimately, EDC surveillance guides policy decisions and intervention planning at both the DoN and DoD levels.

In 2004, NMCPHC received funding to develop an early warning disease alert capability, but the project was cancelled shortly after the funds were provided. Dr. Chris Rennix, then an active duty Captain in the Navy and Executive Director of Readiness Support at NMCPHC, approached the Commanding Officer and proposed to establish a health surveillance center that would focus on communicable disease and injuries. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy

(SECNAV) for Safety tasked the command to provide injury surveillance support for DoN commands.

Upon Dr. Rennix's retirement from the military in 2005, he was asked to stay with the command and officially launch the EDC. With only a handful of government employees and contractors, Dr.

“ The EDC has contributed to numerous efforts that help ensure mission readiness of DoD service members stationed across the globe. ”

Rennix and his team began to develop eDHA reports and establish data collection efforts, but it was a Health Level 7 initiative in May of 2006 that firmly established the EDC as it is known today.

(cont. on page 4)

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Health Level 7 (HL7) refers to an internationally recognized, standardized format used in processing health record messages between and within healthcare networks. The EDC took part in an unprecedented project to gather multiple HL7 data streams from DoD-wide Military Health System (MHS) transactional data—such as laboratory, pharmacy, and radiology records—to develop a comprehensive and efficient public health surveillance system. The data are provided daily to the EDC where they are securely housed. Complex algorithms are then developed and applied to the data to identify surveillance points of interest, such as environmental exposure measures, pharmaceutical support of mental health conditions and indicators of infections. The establishment of the HL7-based surveillance allowed the EDC to enhance existing processes, provide rapid response for emerging threats or concerns, and alert DoD public health experts of threats to military health and readiness.

The EDC's Impact on Military Health

Over the years, the EDC has contributed to numerous efforts that help ensure mission readiness of DoD service members stationed across the globe. In 2015, the EDC completed more than 620 reports. The following projects provide a glimpse into some of the EDC's most notable accomplishments during its 10 years of service:

- During the worldwide H1N1 influenza outbreak of 2009, the EDC tracked every laboratory-confirmed case of influenza in DoD beneficiaries, including identification of hospitalized patients. HL7-formatted data at the EDC allowed the center to provide daily reports to effectively and efficiently monitor the outbreak until it subsided, as well as provide daily updates to DoD stakeholders about the outbreak's impact on the active duty population.
- In response to congressional mandates, the DoD was required to administer and collect deployment health assessment forms from deployed service members. The EDC proposed the most efficient and effective solution for collecting the data and developed the eDHA system. The eDHA system has aided in increasing IT-based business within the EDC to include development and management of DRSi and HPWD.
- The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have led to increased concern of certain behavioral health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and TBI. In 2010, the EDC began developing Force Health Surveillance Reports that provide an overall assessment of mental health within operational commands to include data from medical encounters, pharmacy transactions, and deployment health assessments. These reports are now distributed to 10 separate operational units with a distribution of over 200 customers.



Dr. Rennix (center) poses with the staff members of the EDC in 2016. Since 2006, the EDC has grown significantly, expanding its team of epidemiologists, information technology (IT) specialists, and program analysts from five to more than 40 staff members in 2016. (Photo by NMCPHC Public Affairs)

- In 2009, the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) asked for EDC support to fulfill a national healthcare mandate requiring laboratory-based surveillance of MDROs. In response, the Clinical Epidemiology division designed and deployed an alert process and mechanism for secondary surveillance of MDROs at military treatment facilities (MTFs). This system, currently known as the Navy Antimicrobial Surveillance System (NASS), not only serves to support the requirements, but has become the foundation of comprehensive multi-drug resistance surveillance across the MHS.

“ The future vision is to get our knowledge on the web in a manner where military public health officials can use it more. ”

The EDC’s growth and success could not have been possible without the collaboration and cooperation of everyone involved. “It’s a team effort between the civil service, command, and contract staffs,” said Dr. Rennix. “[All of them] have a huge impact on our influence and growth.”

The Future of the EDC

Some of the EDC’s current projects involve working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to analyze suicide risk in vulnerable populations, providing data support for emerging infections of global threat, and releasing Periodic Health Assessments (PHAs) to all active duty and reserve members of the Navy and Marine Corps. The electronic PHA began in 2015 and is expected to have over 750,000 users once it is officially initiated in the summer of 2016.



In addition to providing the surveillance that protects the health and well-being of all military service members, the EDC is looking forward to making its work more accessible to the DoD military healthcare community, and even the civilian population. “The future vision is to get our knowledge on the web in a manner where military public health officials can use it more,” said Dr. Rennix.

For more information about the EDC, visit <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/epi-data-center/Pages/default.aspx>.

EDC staff members cut the cake to celebrate the EDC’s 10th Anniversary at their 10th Anniversary party on 4 May 2016. (Photo by NMCPHC Public Affairs)

Seek to Go Beyond the Gym During Physical Fitness Month

By NMCPHC Health Promotion and Wellness Staff

Regular physical activity reduces the risk of many adverse health outcomes and increases life expectancy.¹ Being active also improves overall quality of life and performance – both on and off the job.

According to the 2014 Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment Annual Report, 27 percent of active duty Navy and 17 percent of active duty Marine Corps respondents indicated a lack of moderate or vigorous intensity aerobic exercise in their routine.² A smaller percentage of active duty Navy and Marine Corps respondents indicated a lack of strength training exercises, 21 percent and 10 percent, respectively.² The positive picture is that active duty Sailors and Marines exceed the general population in their activity levels, as less than half of the overall U.S. adult population get the recommended physical activity needed each week.³

When Sailors and Marines incorporate physical activities that mimic job duties into their workouts, they will be able to work more efficiently and with less risk of injury.⁴ Completing aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and flexibility exercises will also help sustain physical activity over the long-term and reap greater health benefits.^{1, 5}

During Physical Fitness Month, help your Sailors, Marines, beneficiaries, and civilian personnel learn about the benefits of incorporating exercise into their everyday lives. Share resources that show them how to change their mindset about exercise and demonstrate the small changes they can make to increase physical activity without hitting the gym every day.



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Anna Van Nuys

By incorporating these tips into their daily routines, Sailors, Marines, beneficiaries, and civilian personnel can meet their recommended weekly amounts of physical activity with ease!

- **Change Your Mindset; Change Your Life**: Develop strategies to change your mindset about making time for exercise and overcome other barriers to being physically active.
- **Beyond the Gym - Adding Physical Activity to Your Daily Routine**: Being physically active and becoming fit doesn't have to mean spending hours at the gym. Start by making small changes to your day-to-day activities.
- **Chair Exercises**: Learn five exercises you can complete anywhere – all you need is a chair!

References

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/pdf/paguide.pdf>. Published October 2008. Accessed March 2016.

² Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center EpiData Center Department. Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment 2014. <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/general-tools-and-programs/HRA-2014-report-final.pdf>. Published 2015. Accessed March 2016.

³ Facts About Physical Activity. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/data/facts.htm>. Updated 23 May 2014. Accessed March 2016.

⁴ NOFFS Training System Project Overview. Commander Navy Installations Command. <http://www.navyfitness.org/fitness/noffs-training/noffs-overview>. Accessed March 2016.

⁵ Adding Physical Activity to Your Life. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adding-pa/index.htm>. Updated 4 June 2015. Accessed March 2016.

Navy and Marine Corps Organizations Recognized for Excellence in Health Promotion and Wellness

By NMCPHC Public Affairs

The NMCPHC recognized 443 Navy and Marine Corps organizations as recipients of the Navy Surgeon General's Health Promotion and Wellness Award - the Blue H, 6 May.

The winners in 2015, announced in a GENADMIN from the Navy Surgeon General, 6 May, include all 12 U.S. Navy aircraft carriers, 51 Navy flying squadrons, 68 surface ships/surface forces units, 77 Navy medical treatment facilities, 11 USMC Semper Fit Centers, 51 Marine Corps commands, and 106 Navy Reserve Operational Support Centers.

Record-setting participation occurred from across the Department of the Navy for the ninth consecutive year.

Cmdr. Amy Drayton, NMCPHC director of Population Health, said she was extremely pleased with continued trend in Blue H participation.

"The number of organizations that have applied for the Blue H has increased every year since its inception in 2007, and this confirms the value placed on this workplace-level health promotion tool within the Navy and Marine Corps," said Drayton. "The leap from 342 organizations in 2014 to 443 in 2015 is especially encouraging and exciting."

The Blue H, managed by the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center, encourages and rewards the promotion of primary prevention policies and activities in Department of the Navy and Marine Corps workplaces, communities, and medical treatment facilities, which are critical to maintaining a fit and ready force.

Improving healthy lifestyles of Sailors and Marines also enhances individual quality of life and reduces long-term health care costs. Health topics covered by Blue H criteria include alcohol abuse prevention,

injury and violence-free living, nutrition, physical activity, psychological health, sexual health, tobacco cessation and weight management.

All Navy and Marine Corps commands are eligible for the Blue H. Awards may be earned at three levels: Gold Star, Silver Eagle, and Bronze Anchor. Every organization that applied received at least the Bronze Anchor-level award.

“ The Blue H criteria focus on primary prevention - keeping healthy people healthy. ”

"The Blue H criteria focus on primary prevention - keeping healthy people healthy," said Drayton. "The Blue H not only rewards workplace and community-level health promotion but, perhaps more importantly, guides participants to utilize the most effective interventions and tools - thereby saving time and money and getting everyone pulling on the rope in the same direction."

A complete list of 2015 Blue H winners may be viewed on the Blue H homepage at:

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/Pages/blue-h.aspx>

NMCPHC Departmental Snapshot: Preventive Medicine Program and Policy Support Department, Preventive Medicine Directorate

By Lt. Evelyn Palm and Lt. Cmdr. James Dunford, Navy Marine Corps Public Health Center

The Policy and Program Support Department (PPS) provides specialized preventive medicine and environmental health support leveraging the diverse expertise within the department.

The PPS team delivers technical consultation, policy updates, program evaluation, and analyzes health surveillance data to increase mission readiness by protecting our deployed war-fighters and their dependents, impacting public health programs across the Navy and Marine Corps enterprise.

Recently, PPS has played a significant role in developing and making available clinical and entomological guidance in response to the Zika virus epidemic. With support of NMCPHC's Public Affairs Office, a [Zika virus web-page](#) was developed and is located on the [NMCPHC website](#), providing continuously updated information on preventing Zika

virus transmission. The department has also been engaged in many phases of BUMED's Crisis Action Team and Zika Action Group, further streamlining disease reporting guidance and vector control priorities.

PPS personnel also play an integral role in a number of on-going intra- and interagency programs, to include the Center for Disease Control's Ship Sanitation Program which ensures international health regulations are met through inspections conducted on all Navy, Army, Military Sealift Command, Coast Guard, National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Maritime

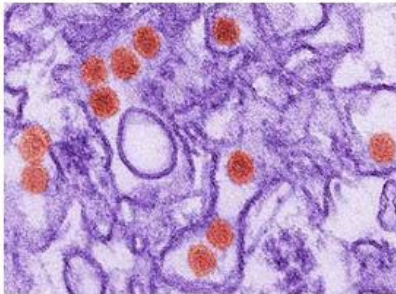
| Health Providers and Professionals | | Service Members, Families and Retirees | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|--|-------------------|---------------------|
| Field Activities | Lab Operations | Environmental Health | Population Health | Preventive Medicine |

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center > Program and Policy Support > Zika Virus

PROGRAM AND POLICY SUPPORT

- Current Topics in Preventive Medicine
- Child Youth Program Facilities
- Diseases and Conditions
- Field Preventive Medicine
- Food Sanitation and Safety
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996
- Living Spaces and Related Service Facilities
- Medical Surveillance and Medical Event Reporting
 - Disease and Injury

ZIKA VIRUS



Zika virus is a flavivirus that is primarily transmitted via the bite of *Aedes* mosquitoes, similar to dengue virus or chikungunya virus. Zika virus infection usually does not cause symptoms. When symptoms do occur, it causes mild illness with symptoms including fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis. While there is no vaccine or drug to protect against Zika virus, the best way to prevent infection is through mosquito bite prevention.

Your cognizant NEPMU is available to answer any questions about Zika virus or other medical events. NEPMU staff can assist with investigation support, risk assessment, vector control measures, and obtaining definitive laboratory testing.

- Information for Preventive Medicine Departments
- Information for Installation and Operational Vector Control and Pest Management

Upcoming NMCPHC Trainings and Conferences



- 17 May, 12 & 29 July: [Tobacco Cessation Facilitator Training](#)
- 31 May: Disease Surveillance Training Series – [Medical Event Reporting Focus Group](#)
- 28 June: Disease Surveillance Training Series – [DRSi Tuberculosis Module Demo](#)
- 11 - 15 July: [DOEHRS-IH Training](#)
- 25 - 27 July: [Navy Health Promotion & Wellness Course](#)
- 27 July: [CHOW Course](#)
- 28 July: [ShipShape Program Facilitator Training](#)

Administration vessels. Our experts also serve on numerous boards such as the Defense Health Agency Shared Food Services and CNIC Water Quality Oversight Councils. As BUMED medical representative to the CNIC Water Quality Oversight

“ PPS has played a significant role in developing and making available clinical and entomological guidance in response to the Zika virus epidemic. ”

Council/NAVFAC drinking water program, PPS provides unequivocal support by assisting in year-round drinking water sanitary surveys conducted OCONUS, a triannual requirement that evaluates various drinking water systems at naval installations. In collaboration with the Environmental Health Directorate, PPS has embarked on numerous public health risk assessments to ensure our Sailors, Marines and their beneficiaries have access to water fit for human consumption.

Displaying enterprise innovation technologies to enhance efficiency, PPS has recently helped develop a user friendly disease outbreak table top mobile app, supporting the Expeditionary Platforms Department's goals to further optimize operational

support. Increasing readiness and preserving the health and wellbeing of our war-fighters and beneficiaries through preventive medicine policy and program updates is the essential key to our success!

For more information regarding NMCPHC's Preventive Medicine Program and Policy Support department, visit: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/program-and-policy-support/Pages/default.aspx>



Lt. Cmdr. James Dunford, an entomologist assigned to Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center, talks with local entomologists during a subject matter expert exchange in 2015. (Photo by Spc. Lance Hartung)

New Environmental Health Listservs Facilitate Streamlined Communication in Navy's Occupational Health Community

By NMCPHC Public Affairs

The NMCPHC announced the publication of two new Occupational Health (OH) and Medical Matrix Online (MMO) listservs, 25 April.

The listservs represent significant enhancements supporting global communications within the Occupational Health and Environmental Programs communities within the U.S Navy and Marine Corps.

After having identified a global communications gap in the OH community, NMCPHC teamed up with U.S. BUMED, Navy Medicine East, Navy Medicine West, and the OH specialty leader to create electronic mailing lists, or listservs, for the OH and MMO communities.

"It has been very helpful because pertinent information is now coming from one unified point of contact," said Adriene Simmons, NME regional OH program manager. Previously, information was shared across several, and sometimes outdated listservs, which created confusion among providers and subject-matter experts about which was the "official" list.

Establishing this streamlined communications process has facilitated efficient and effective dissemination of information from BUMED, NME, NMW, and the specialty leader to OH providers around the world.

"I am pleased to see that there are more interactions and clarification of information regarding how clinics incorporate changes into their practice," said Capt. Alan Philippi, department head for OEM. The OH listserv is primarily comprised of OH providers and nurses in the field. It currently provides communications regarding BUMED and NME/NMW policy updates, vacancy announcements, and other pertinent information. The MMO listserv is

comprised of MMO users, which extend beyond OH providers and nurses, and provides information on MMO downtime and updates.

MMO is the online application that is the authoritative source of guidance for Occupational Medical Surveillance and Certification Exams throughout the Navy. The MMO replaced PC Matrix March 31. The purpose of the MMO is to streamline several tasks for the provider while functioning similarly to the now defunct PC Matrix.

“I am pleased to see that there are more interactions and clarification of information regarding how clinics incorporate changes into their practice.”

Since 19 January, the MMO listserv has seen a 31 percent increase in the number of users. Individuals can send the names of new people who should be added, or request access to the listservs themselves via an email stating that lists they should be a part of.

For more information on MMO or to request an MMO account, contact NMCPHC at <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/occupational-and-environmental-medicine/oemd/Pages/medical-matrix-online.aspx>

Preventive Medicine Unit Hosts Joint Criminal Investigation Workshop



By Lt. Cmdr. Lucas Johnson, Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit Two Public Affairs

Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit Two (NEPMU-2) hosted a unique criminal investigation workshop, 29 March, providing valuable training for public health and law enforcement officials who may be called to participate in joint agency investigations involving biologic agents.

“Workshops and combined training are extremely important to prevent and prepare for potential attacks involving biological agents,” said Special Agent William Brown, weapons of mass destruction coordinator at the Federal Bureau of Investigations Norfolk, Virginia Field Office. “Bringing law enforcement and others that might be involved in an investigation in the training environment to share viewpoints and techniques is key.”

The one-day Joint Criminal-Epidemiological Investigations Workshop was attended by more than 70 participants from public health, law enforcement, first responder, and emergency preparedness communities representing a variety of federal, state and local organizations.

“ Bringing law enforcement and others that might be involved in an investigation in the training environment to share viewpoints is key. ”

Course content included an overview of potential biologic threats, review of applicable federal privacy laws, joint investigation protocols, and joint interviewing techniques. Presenters included public health and law enforcement subject matter experts from NEPMU-2, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The course culminated in an information sharing exercise where participants translated their enhanced knowledge into best practices for sharing critical information to better protect the public health.

“This class was an incredible opportunity to cross many swim lanes. Infectious diseases don’t stop at the fence line, and nefarious intent doesn’t discriminate between service members and civilians,” said Cmdr. Jennifer Espiritu, officer in charge of NEPMU-2. “Learning names, faces and professional roles now puts us that much ahead of the game when the time comes.”

For more information regarding NEPMU-2, visit www.med.navy.mil/sites/nepmu2/Pages/default.aspx

Deployable Preventive Medicine Team Completes Operational Readiness Evaluation



By Lt. Rohan Jairam, Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit Five Public Affairs

Members of Forward Deployable Preventive Medicine Unit (FDPMU) Team 4 completed a seven-day simulated exercise to evaluate deployment readiness at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, 19-26 April.

Fifteen Sailors assigned to Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit 5 San Diego's FDPMU platform took part in the Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE). The team was augmented by three members of Hawaii-based NEPMU-6, along with observers from the Republic of Singapore Armed Forces, as part of a greater effort to strengthen and validate Preventive Medicine capabilities in the United States Pacific Command (PACOM) area of responsibility.

“ The FDPMU is the most capable and advanced preventive medicine unit across the services. ”

“The visit from our Singaporean partners provided an excellent opportunity for subject matter expertise exchanges,” said Lt. Cmdr. George Vancil, Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center FDPMU program manager. “We look forward to working with them during Pacific Partnership 2016.”

Exercise planners and coordinators from NMCPHC were on site to evaluate the performance of the FDPMU as they completed the ORE. Scenarios tested the team's capabilities to identify and evaluate environmental health hazards, conduct disease vector surveillance and infectious disease assessments, while assessing health outcomes in a deployed environment.

Lt. Nickita Brown, NEPMU-5's FDPMU coordinator, was also on hand to gauge the team's potential for success.

“Based on their performance during this training evolution, I am confident in their success this summer as they provide public health services throughout the Pacific,” said Brown.

“The FDPMU is the most capable and advanced preventive medicine unit across the services,” concluded Vancil.

FDPMUs provide health services support (HSS) to Navy and Marine Corps forces by rapidly assessing, preventing, and controlling health threats in the theater of operations to enhance organic preventive medicine assets. Teams that successfully complete the ORE are certified as fully capable to support deployed forces with flexible and sustainable force health protection services.

For more news from the Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit 5, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/nepmu5>

Follow NEPMU5 on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/nepmu5>

HM2 Johnson Wins 2016 Hampton Roads Volunteer Achievement Award

By Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit Two Public Affairs

Bravo Zulu to Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit Two (NEPMU-2) Hospital Corpsman 2nd class, Samuel C. Johnson, for winning the 2016 Hampton Roads Individual Volunteer Achievement Award.



HM2 Johnson's devotion and diligence is evident throughout his efforts with the community and has set the standard at NEPMU-2.

Though HM2 Johnson is a mission first Sailor, he found time to spend over 600 hours as the Chapter Captain for the Veteran centric organization, Team Red White & Blue (RWB). In a few short months, HM2 took a small group of Team RWB members with

little to no direction and turned it into a well-organized and thriving Chapter impacting 1,068 service members, veterans, and civilians alike throughout Hampton Roads. Together they coordinated over 462 events that encompassed physical/social activities for veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) which aided in their recovery.

Additionally, he spent 160 off duty hours assisting the Hampton Roads Council of Veterans Organization with the 2015 Veterans Day Parade; orchestrated a fundraiser totaling \$400 in support of the Horton Wreath Society, an organization that provides live wreaths for gravesites at the Albert G. Horton Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk, VA; and volunteered at the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia.

His dedication to impacting Veterans' lives and the lives of community members in a positive manner has resulted in the ability to foster a positive environment for veterans and service members. HM2 Johnson has unmatched talent and puts forth nothing less than 100% as he promotes a culture of volunteer service for all to emulate.

[Read more about the Hampton Roads Volunteer Achievement Awards >>](#)



Awards

Congratulations to the NMCPHC Civilian Employee of the First Quarter Award winners!

Category I Winner:
Mr. Bernard Watson

Category II Winner:
Ms. Jessica Newton

Promotions

Congratulations the following officers who have been selected for promotion to Captain:

CDR Jennifer Espiritu
CDR Brian Feldman
CDR Gregg Gellman
CDR Peter Obenauer
CDR Danny Shiao
CDR Jeffrey Stancil
CDR Douglas Stephens

Congratulations to Lt. j.g. Prybylski on his recent promotion.



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Preventive Medicine Unit Supports Smithsonian Museum in Djibouti Africa

By Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit Seven Public Affairs

NEPMU-7 team members, Lt. Cmdr. Connie Johnson, entomologist, and Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jay Cherluck, preventive medicine technician, spent two weeks chasing insects across the desert in Djibouti as part of an ecological survey of Camp Lemonnier led by scientists from the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History.

The survey was conducted to support the development of the installation's Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) and supplement the Camp Lemonnier Airfield Bird Airstrike Hazard (BASH) program. The program allows Naval forces to effectively conduct operations in an environmentally responsible and increase aircraft safety through prevention of wildlife related mishaps.

The NEPMU-7 Entomology Team, or "bug chasers" as they are commonly known, normally focus on insects and arachnids that are either venomous or capable of transmitting disease. Always on their radar is the most dangerous insect in the world, the mosquito, an insect responsible for millions of human deaths worldwide by spreading diseases such as Malaria. This was a unique opportunity and a change of pace for the team to collect other insects.

"While it was fun to collect beetles and butterflies I'd never seen



Photo by Lt. Desiree V. Woodman

before, the important point of this work was that it was part of a comprehensive survey of plants and animals that encompasses the entire food web, from the plants that insects feed upon to the top predators. Knowledge of who-eats-who is vital in the management of wildlife hazards to aircraft," said Johnson.

According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), over 13,000 strikes involving wildlife occur

annually, 97 percent of the reported strikes involve birds. The strikes cost over \$200 million in losses, 172 thousand hours in aircraft downtime and over a 24-year period from 1990-2014 resulted in 223 injuries and 288 human fatalities.

The INRMP and BASH program are reviewed annually with periodic surveys conducted as needed by biologists with the Naval Facilities Engineering Command. This recent survey effort utilized the expertise of a team of Smithsonian scientists including Carla Dove, program manager for the museum's Division of Birds, who not only led the expedition but also serves as the DoD and FAA expert in forensic examinations of suspected bird strikes. Dove's team can identify a bird species from a single feather and confirm the identification through comparison with an ever increasing library of DNA samples with many additions collected on the recent expedition.

"The Djibouti expedition is a perfect example of inter-agency collaboration working together to benefit a variety of disciplines," said Dove. "Not only are we increasing our knowledge of the flora, fauna and disease vectors for the benefit of the U.S. Navy, but we are also contributing to baseline data for the Djiboutian government and providing samples for researchers worldwide."

At the end of the month-long collection effort, NEPMU-7 joined The Smithsonian Institute to advertise the results of the study at a show and tell hosted by Camp Lemonnier.

Over 500 military and DoD personnel attended to see samples of the specimens that were collected over the month. In total the Smithsonian-led expedition preserved 75 species of bird, 18 species of mammals, 29 species of reptiles, 14 plant specimens and over 1,600 arthropods including several species of spider, scorpion and insect.

All specimens will be housed in the Smithsonian Natural History Museum and available for use in research worldwide.

NEPMU-7 entomology provides force health protection through expert guidance in vector surveillance and control to both shore-based and forward deployed preventive medicine personnel throughout Europe, Africa and Southwest Asia.

For more information on NEPMU-7 products and services: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/nepmu-7/Pages/default.aspx>.



Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti held a Smithsonian Show & Tell at 11 Degrees North, 24 February. Over 500 people attended the event, which included US Embassy personnel and their families. The collected specimens will go back to Washington, D.C. and be housed in the Smithsonian Natural History Museum for researchers all around the world to use in various research projects. (Photo by Lt. Desiree V. Woodman)

Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit Seven Sailors Recognized by Surgeon General

By Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Brinn Hefron, Naval Hospital Rota Public Affairs

Navy Surgeon General Vice Adm. Forrest Faison visited Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit Seven (NEPMU-7) as part of a visit to Naval Station Rota.

The surgeon general emphasized the important work being done by NEPMU-7 to provide necessary support to naval forces in the African and European theaters. "I'm incredibly impressed with the work this unit is doing," said Faison. "NEPMU-7 provides exceptional preventive medicine services that keep our operational and expeditionary forces ready and able to conduct their missions throughout the region."

Throughout his visit, the staff members of NEPMU-7 highlighted some of the work they have done since the recommissioning of the unit in June 2014.

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Nicole Gacayan, of San Jose, Calif., spoke about her missions with Naval Expeditionary Task Force Europe and Africa alongside

the Army's 7th Mission Support Command in the Combined Joint Exercise in Seville, Spain earlier this month. During the exercise, Gacayan provided onsite assessments for berthing and food facilities and cross training between Spanish Emergency Military Unit first responders and the Spanish Army in areas of public health.

"It was amazing to meet with our Spanish counterparts and have joint discussions," said Gacayan. "Participating in this exercise and in these discussions will help improve the overall response in case of a real natural disaster."

During the visit, Faison presented a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal to Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Benjamin Murphy.



Murphy received the award for his exceptional performance while assigned as the only preventive medicine authority supporting training exercises in Ukraine and Serbia. He additionally played a critical role in developing consequence management scenarios for the upcoming exercise Operation Anakonda.

“Receiving this award from my leadership is a great honor, and to be presented this award by the surgeon general of the Navy is extraordinary. I could not have done this without the support of my team here at NEPMU-7,” said Murphy.

In addition to recognizing the work of the Sailors, Faison also recognized Capt. Juliann Althoff, NEPMU-7's officer in charge, for her selection as the senior

officer recipient of the Capt. Joy Bright Hancock leadership award. This award is to honor the visionary leadership of inspirational leaders whose ideals foster positive working environments and further the integration of women into the Navy.

“Our unit is remarkable,” said Althoff. “We do amazing things together, over the past two years they have built this command from the ground up to being fully mission capable, I couldn't be more proud than to show the surgeon general all they have accomplished.”

For more information on NEPMU-7 products and services: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/nepmu-7/Pages/default.aspx>.



2016 Crews Into Shape Challenge - Well Done Crews Teams!

What a blast we had celebrating Crews into Shape 2016! Donut Dodgers, Veggie Slayers from Singapore; Cast a Weighs; Get Off Your Seat; and over 400 other teams. **WELL DONE!** Congratulations on completing Crews into Shape Challenge 2016!

This year's challenge saw a **30% increase** in participation from last year with a total of 2,524 participants! The Crews Into Shape challenge is held every March in conjunction with National Nutrition Month and is sponsored annually by the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC). The intent of the challenge is to spark and guide workplace-focused, team-oriented, physical activity, and improved fruit & vegetable intake.

Thanks to all that participated in Crews into Shape this past month, and know that a team can participate in Crews into Shape any time of the year! Just visit our NMCPHC Crews into Shape Homepage: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/Pages/crews-into-shape.aspx>

